Advanced Fingerpicking Exercises for building Dexterity

1. (No guitar needed for this exercise) Be able to count 1, 2, 3, 4 in a consistent "clock-like" tempo 60bpm (beats per minute). Tap your foot on the down-beat of 1, 2, 3, 4. Counting out loud is VERY important at first. It will help keep you in time. These are called ¼ notes or quarter notes because you can fit 4 of them in a measure. See line 1 of the associated PDF matrix.
2. (No guitar needed for this exercise) Now, add the "and" or upbeat like, 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 +. Where the + sign is, say "and". This should be in the very "center" of the numbers on either side of it. That is it should be even, not uneven or "swung" like a heartbeat. Think like the second hand of a watch, but twice as fast. These are called 1/8 notes or eighth notes because you can fit 8 of them in a measure of four beats. See line 2 of the associated PDF matrix.
3. (No guitar needed for this exercise) To count 1/16 or sixteenth notes we must be able to fit 16 notes within a measure. This is done by counting 1 e an da, 2 e an da, 3 e an da, 4 e an da. See line 3 of the associated PDF matrix.
4. Put your 2nd finger at the 2nd fret of the D string (4th). Now, pick the low open E string with your thumb (P) on 1, 2, 3, 4. Do this for a bit while you count out loud – 1, 2, 3, 4. See line 4 of the associated PDF matrix.
5. Once you get the hang of that let's add the D string with the index finger (I) on the "and" of the beat that follows each number. Remember that we will use the PIMA rule as we did in our first fingerpicking exercise. P=Thumb, I=Index, M=Middle and A=Ring (think Anniversary ring). You should be counting 1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + while you play this. MASTER this before moving on. Feel free to try other chords too. For the G chord, just form the chord and finger pick the same strings. For chords with a 5th string root, like A- and C, move your fingerpicking fingers down a string to the A and G string. See line 5 of the associated PDF matrix.
6. For the next few exercises, follow the video and use the patterns in the associated matrix to help you. See line 6-27 of the associated PDF matrix.
7. Once you feel confident about all the exercises, try changing your fingers up while still using the patterns. For instance, where you see an A finger, put an I finger, and vice-versa.